

Dear
Mike



Dear Mike by disneyprincess315

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Summary: "Mike, this letter's purpose is to give you a new perspective on your relationship with the best person you've ever met." Mileven.

1. Introduction

Michael Wheeler-

Mike, I cried myself to sleep last night, because I couldn't stop thinking about you. I'm sorry if that sounds weird, but I couldn't stop thinking about the pain you're in right now. I couldn't stop thinking about the overwhelming, unbearable hole you have because she's missing. Gone. Lost.

Gone.

You love her. Holy crap, you absolutely, truly love her. Your heart will belong to her forever. You'll care for her. Be there for her. Protect her. And most importantly, love her because she deserves it, gosh dang it.

That is...if you ever see her again.

I know things you don't, Mike. But right now, I'm not going to gloss over how much it hurts. How much it rips you apart, little by little every day.

This letter's purpose is not to intentionally add to the pain. This is to give you a new perspective on your relationship with the best person you've ever met.

Because you deserve to know how much you mean to her.

2. Chapter One

She trusted you. She trusted you from the very start. Even though you didn't know her past then, when you look back at it now, you're amazed at how much she trusted you with.

She let you bring her home. And then you taught her something. Privacy. That was the first concept she ever learned from you. And you were so patient, so unbelievably patient with her. It didn't take very many words, but you gently explained it to her, and even though she was still scared, she still had her guard up, she understood what you had given her and...she trusted you.

There's that theme again...trust.

Later that night, you gave her a home. I know it's empty now. I know that sends a spike of pain through you that you almost can't bear, but stay with me. Now dressed in the same clothes you had worn the night before, she sat, staring at you with those brown, innocent eyes. And you asked her a question no one ever had before. It was simple. You wanted to know her name. She wasn't proud of it, but she wordlessly showed you the only name she had ever known.

Eleven.

You accepted that. You didn't know and still probably don't know how much that meant to her. You accepted her name.

You told her yours and she would never forget it. Then, making the connection between your shortened name and her name, you introduced a new concept. Nicknames. You suggested you call her El. Short for Eleven.

Then, using her new name, you bid her goodnight.

"Night Mike" you heard in return.

That exchange makes you smile every time you remember it. It was so innocent, so pure, so...perfect. If you could go back and live in that moment, I know you would.

Your mind was jumbled as you lay in bed that night. Thoughts about Will were present...but you couldn't stop thinking about her. You couldn't stop thinking about El.

But here's something I want you to realize. The next morning, after you wolf down your breakfast and shove some of it into your pockets, you rush downstairs to see her, lift up the blanket of her fort and

she's still there.

She had stayed. It would've been extremely easy for her to get up, walk out of your basement door and leave. But she didn't. She had slept in the fort you had built her and waited patiently for you to come back downstairs. Because she knew you would. Why? Because

Mike.

She trusted you.

3. Chapter Two

Excellent student. Straight A's. Science geek. Brilliant kid.

And yet, you skipped school. Michael Wheeler skipped school.

Bad people were after her. You couldn't just leave her for seven hours, alone and vulnerable. Something you couldn't ignore was tugging at you. You couldn't quite put a finger on it, but that feeling eventually would consume you over the course of the next week. Something inside you told you to protect her.

What you hadn't counted on, however, was your mom getting home so early. Slightly disappointed that you wouldn't get to watch her explore your own little corner of the world anymore, you tried to get her back to the basement, knowing that she had to stay hidden. That didn't work, so you went to the next place you could think of: your bedroom closet.

Begging her to get it, you let the word 'promise' escape your lips. She'd never heard it before, so you hurriedly gave her the definition, not knowing how dear you would hold that word to your heart in the future. She timidly stepped in and you shut the door.

Before I tell you this, please understand you can't blame yourself. There's absolutely no way you could've known. But that wasn't the first time a door had been closed in her face, locking her in darkness. A memory consumed her and she fell to her knees.

She remembers the screams. Her screams. She remembers her cry for help, pleading to Papa, the only father figure she had ever known as she fought. She fought with everything she had against the two men that were dragging her to the darkness. She fought and she screamed and she cried. But she couldn't stop them. They still threw her into that room and slammed the door, the echo of it ringing in her ears.

No one came to get her for a day.

She expected you to do the same. She had already accepted her fate by the time you reopened that door, five minutes later.

You came back. To you, I know it didn't seem like that big of a deal, but to her, it was incredible. And not only that, but the first thing you did was make sure she was okay, the tears on her face making your heart ache.

Yes, she was okay now that you were in front of her. You gently asked again and nodded once more, promising that she was okay. Because she understood it now.

You had promised not to tell your mom about her. And you hadn't.

Because a promise is something you can't break.

Ever.

4. Chapter Three

You couldn't skip school forever though. As much as you would've liked to, people, your mom in particular, would get suspicious. You tell yourself over and over again that she would be okay. I mean, as it turns out, the girl has superpowers. She can take care of herself...right?

Dustin and Lucas rush out of the basement and you find yourself kneeling in front of her. With the most gentle tone you've ever used in your life, you quickly give her instructions for when you're gone. She listens intently, soaking up every word.

You tell her to meet you and your friends at the power lines behind your house after school. Confusion flickers across her face and you sense it, which is something you're getting pretty good at.

So you do the first thing you think of. You take off the watch you wear constantly and she holds out her hand. You click the small plastic device around her wrist and explain what to do when the numbers read 3-1-5.

When the bell rings at school these days, you still hear her tiny voice repeating that back to you.

At three fifteen, she did indeed meet you at the power lines that day. But she never took your watch off.

It stayed on her wrist for four days.

You know this story and you know where it's headed. You know when she gave it back to you.

Mike, think about everything that happened in those four days. Through all of that, she kept it on. Because it reminded her of you. She would look at it and immediately feel safe.

You. Made her feel safe.

5. Chapter Four

She was beautiful. She is beautiful. Even from your first meeting that rainy night, her perfect brown eyes entranced you and you couldn't help but sneak a glance every once and awhile to admire her flawless features. And as you got to know who she was as a person, she only got prettier and prettier.

So you didn't see the point of putting makeup on her. You didn't know how you could possibly make her look better than she already did. But yet, there you were, sitting on Nancy's bed with El directly in front of you.

The thing you remember most about that moment is how close her face was to yours. You tried to shake it off and focus on the task at hand as you fumbled with all those brushes and containers, but when you glanced back up, you sucked in a breath. You assume it's because you were sitting so close together, but

you missed the part where she leaned in.

See, she was so excited to learn something new about the world. Makeup was yet another thing she hadn't had any exposure to. She was ready for you to teach her.

She loved it when you taught her things. You would explain it so simply, so patiently. And even though this time you didn't use any words and she thought it was weird at first, she understood it's purpose immediately when she saw the look on your face.

You know which one I'm talking about. The one when you laid eyes on the most gorgeous thing you had ever seen in the universe.

As she stepped out of that room in the wig and dress given to her by Dustin and Lucas, she felt oddly insecure. Her wardrobe her entire life had been hospital gowns. That was it. This was...different and she didn't know how to react. She didn't know how *you* would react.

But then she saw your eyebrows shoot up. Then she watched your mouth go slack. Then she noticed the intensity of your gaze.

You called her pretty.

Pause in this moment. She's the only thing you can focus on and you're the only thing she can focus on.

No one had ever called her pretty. No one had ever looked at her the way you couldn't stop looking at her.

A genuine smile creeps across her face. You seem to be the cause of a lot of those lately. On the inside, she's glowing. Someone had said she was pretty. And that someone just so happened to be Michael Wheeler.

You want to live in this moment forever and not think about what happened next. I know you mentally kick yourself every time you remember what you said after that. So why not just stay here? Because I know this moment means a lot to you.

And I know it means everything to her.

6. Chapter Five

She didn't mean it.

I know she didn't.

You didn't mean it.

I know you didn't.

But it still happened.

You got in a fight over El. That thought seems crazy to you now, but then you remember the things Lucas had said and the anger growing inside you at every word that came out of his mouth, desperate to protect and defend her.

You knew he still hadn't fully accepted El. You knew he was annoyed that Will still hadn't been found. But he was accusing her of things that she didn't deserve to be accused for.

And on top of all that, El was standing right there. It was probably hurting her more that it was hurting you.

When he called her a monster, that was it. Something inside of you snapped. How. Dare. He. Blinded by rage, you attacked, justifying your actions with the fact that you were defending her, which was totally valid.

But El couldn't stand it. Two of her friends were fighting over her. She didn't mean it, she didn't mean any of it. She attacked, justifying her actions with the fact that she was defending you, and you felt Lucas suddenly go flying.

He's still your friend, though. Extremely worried that he wouldn't be okay, you yelled things at her you didn't mean.

You would replay those words over and over in your mind for the next several hours, desperately wishing you could turn back time and take them back. But there's something else about that event that it would take you a while to realize.

She sent Lucas flying. She never even touched you.

She could've thrown you off of Lucas. She could've thrown you both apart at the same time.

But the thought of hurting you never crossed her mind.

Why?

Because, Mike, you were the one who consistently stayed by her side, literally, and on her side, figuratively.

And for that, she was and is eternally grateful.

7. Chapter Six

A friend is someone you'd do anything for.

It's replaying over and over in your mind as you force your feet forward to the two hundred feet drop of that cliff. You take one step, then another until, shaking, you reach the edge.

A friend is someone you'd do ANYTHING for.

Troy wasn't kidding. He'd hurt Dustin without thinking twice. You believed that. The kid had a *knife*. You weren't about to question whether or not he was serious, because you knew he was absolutely serious.

Your options were clear. Jump or watch one of your best friends suffer. There was no doubt in your mind that you were choosing wrong as you stood staring downwards at the water below.

She was watching you. You didn't know it, but she was silently begging you to turn back, to get as far away from the edge as possible. She hated the sight of Dustin with a knife dangerously close to his face, but she could barely stand to watch you teeter on the edge; your name is on her lips.

Everything else has faded away. Troy's taunting threats and Dustin's desperate screams all turn to muffled nothingness. The wind that was previously whipping around your body has disappeared as time slows down. The only sound you are even slightly aware of is your own breathing as you breathe in and out. In and out.

A friend is someone you'd do anything for. A friend is someone you'd do anything for.

You jump.

A girl lets out a silent, wordless scream.

You fall. You're falling. Your mind cries out in terror, cursing you for what you just did as you drop down, down, down.

Then everything stops.

It just...stops.

One side of you is panicking. You're suspended in midair by something that isn't tangible. You can't feel a thing and the water is still less than a hundred feet below you, taunting you and spelling out certain death.

The other side of you is in shock. The realization of what you just did slams into you and death seems extremely more real than it ever had. You finally become aware of the adrenaline churning through your body as you feel yourself get yanked upward, the water shrinking and getting farther and farther away.

And a small sliver of you realizes who's behind this. And that part of you is leaping with joy.

The invisible force releases you and you fall back to earth, pain immediately shooting up your body.

However, you forget all about that when you turn and see something you're never going to forget.

El

is walking towards you.

Overwhelming emotions crash into you and you can't stop staring at her.

She came back.

El came back.

Your heart expands in your chest as she stretches out her mind once again to shove one bully to the ground and snap the bones in the arm of the other. She commands them to go.

They run.

And she collapses.

You're by her side in seconds, repeating her name as she succumbs to

unconsciousness. When her eyes open again, she speaks three words that physically hurt your heart.

Mike. I'm sorry.

Sorry? What're you sorry for?

The gate. I opened it.

I'm the monster.

You shake your head. She's the farthest thing from a monster that you can think of. You almost died. But she saved you.

Do you understand?

You saved me.

Seeing that she's still not convinced, you reach down and pull the girl you love into an embrace.

At the lab, touch meant pain. Touch meant scars and bruises. When people touched her, they meant to hurt her.

But, Mike?

You didn't hurt her.

She felt incredibly safe in your arms, her head on your shoulder and more loved than she ever had in her entire life.

8. Chapter Seven

You were so incredibly grateful that she was back. And not only had she come back, but she had quite literally saved your life.

On the bike ride back from the quarry, you couldn't stop replaying it in your head. The knife. The threats. The jump. The fall. The catch. Eleven.

El. She was back and her hands were firmly gripping your jacket, her head resting in between your shoulder blades, heavy from exhaustion as you pedaled home. Whenever your mind would reemerge from the fog it was in, you would secretly grin, enjoying being able to feel her warmth against your back, after being separated for about a day. Even in those twenty-four hours, the only thing on your mind was her, and you missed El more than you'd ever missed anyone.

That was just a day. It's been eight months.

I'm so sorry.

When you finally arrived back home, your first instinct was to get her cleaned up. It was the least you could do after she had just casually saved you from death.

Remembering what happened in your basement bathroom that afternoon fills you with unexplainable joy and sends butterflies soaring through your stomach.

Oh, how you wish you could be alone with her like that again.

You remember stumbling over your words to gently reassure her that she was still pretty (REALLY pretty). You remember telling her you were happy she was home, trying to stop yourself from blushing.

You meant that. Me too, she replied. She meant that with all of her heart.

Then you locked eyes with her. Her gaze was filled with an intensity that made your heart beat wildly and you felt your body go weak.

El took a step. And then another. Inch by torturous inch, she got closer. You could barely breathe. And still, her eyes bored into yours with a longing and a passion that you felt too.

Love. It's a big word, but it's the only one that perfectly fits what is swirling between you two in this moment. A pure, genuine, passionate love is pulling her closer to you. You've never been more in love in your entire life.

She's close enough now that you can feel her breath on your face and

Dustin slams the door open.

The two of you rush out of the room and you silently curse him for ruining...whatever was about to happen.

Mike?

He slammed that door open.

Meaning it was previously closed.

Flashback to the night you first brought El home. You showed her to that same bathroom as she clutched the close you had given her and turned to shut the door. She spun around and caught it. She wouldn't let you close that door. The next day, you would put her in a closet, shut the door, and come back to find tears streaming down her face.

And yet, El had been standing in that room. With the door closed.

But you were standing right next to her. And there's no place she would've rather been.

Whatever that means to you, I hope it at least makes you smile.

9. Chapter Eight

A/N: I wasn't actually planning on adding an author's note until the very end of this fic, but I just had to say something about that trailer.

AHHHHHHHHHH I CAN'T BREATHE IT WAS ABSOLUTELY INSANE AND INCREDIBLE AND HOLY CRAP I CANNOT WAIT UNTIL OCTOBER AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! GO WATCH IT RIGHT NOW IF YOU HAVEN'T! (and if you haven't, what're you doing with your life?)

Also, I'm sorry if this chapter hurts you as much as it hurt me to write...

Mike.

Everything I'm about to say is going to hurt. It's going to reopen wounds that haven't fully healed and probably never will. You don't have to keep reading. You have my permission to stop right now. But I need to tell you this, whether you actually choose to read these words or not.

I'll start at the beginning of the night...

You kissed her. Holy flippin' crap, Michael Wheeler kissed a girl. And not just any girl. You kissed El.

It was completely spontaneous. You were telling her all about the future you had mapped out for her in your head, while your stomach was doing flips every time her smile would grow. She loved hearing you talk about everything she would get to experience and learn about the world. And she especially loved that you would be there every step of the way to guide her.

And then you invited her to the Snow Ball.

It just slipped out of your mouth, surprising you, but you didn't take it back.

You really, really wanted to go with her to that dance.

Of course, she didn't quite understand the implications of it and it took every ounce of courage in your body to admit out loud that you...liked her.

In your mind, you knew you loved her, although you were afraid you would scare her away by saying that. But your confession held the exact same weight.

Still not quite catching on, she asked if you meant you liked her as a friend.

No, not a friend.

As you stammered for your next words, she waited patiently, hoping you could finally explain the overwhelming warm, glowing sensation she felt whenever you would look into her eyes a certain way or teach her something about the world with a gentle tone that she adored.

She loved you. She just didn't know how to say it.

And apparently neither did you. Because the next thing you know, all the passion and emotions she sparked in you that you had tried to keep bottled up over the past week overflowed and your lips are on hers for one brief, insane moment.

She had never let anyone get that close to her.

And she didn't pull away.

When you finally did, she didn't ask you to explain what you had just done. She didn't ask you *why* you had done it.

El had never been exposed to kissing, much less the concept and deeper meaning behind it.

But when your mouth left hers, she understood perfectly what it meant. Because the fireworks bursting in her mind and pure joy soaring through her gave her the definition she needed.

Neither of you wanted this moment to end as a comfortable content, yet electric silence settled between you two.

But, of course, that's when everything went spiraling downwards.

Thinking Nancy and Jonathan had just pulled up to the school, you ran outside to meet them, reassuring El that you would be back, the adrenaline still rushing through you.

It wasn't Nancy and Jonathan.

The bad men. They had found you.

You dashed back inside to your friends (and your more-than-friend) and hurriedly told them who was here.

Never wanting to let her out of your sight again and ready to protect her at all costs, you grabbed El's hand and the four of you ran for your lives.

A group of bad men burst through the doors you were headed to. You guys turned and sprinted as fast as you could in the other direction. A group came through those doors too. And then the next doors and the next.

You were trapped. Panic spreads through your body and you try to think of a way to escape but then...you realize the agents have stopped moving. You look closer at the one pointing a gun to your head and notice two tiny rivers of blood streaming from his eyes. Horrified, you glance at El and realize she's causing this. For a split second, you smile, marveling at how, once again, she was saving you.

They collapse to the ground with one big thud and right after that happens

El falls too.

Your stomach drops and you rush to her side.

She's not waking up. El. El!

You hear a man's voice and you look up to see an older man coming towards you. He commands you to leave her.

That isn't going to happen. You tell him that if they want El, they're

gonna have to kill the three of you first.

She had risked her life to save you multiple times. You were more than willing to do the same for her.

A rough pair of arms grabs you from behind and you scream. You fight and fight with everything in you, but the arms hold you firmly in place.

You feel like throwing up when he touches her. He raises her head and pure hatred for this man floods through you. Let her go. Let her go, you bastard!

He tells her she's sick. He says he's going to make her better. She's whimpering and your need to protect her is overwhelming. You fight as hard as you can, your brain screaming to save her from the bad man.

In a broken, desperate, pleading voice, she calls your name. Your name. Not Lucas's. Not Dustin's. Not Papa's.

Mike.

She struggles, trying to escape the man's grasp. She cries out for you again.

You hate him. And you love her.

You hate him and you love her and all you can do right now is pour all your strength into fighting the arms holding you back and watch as she reaches for you.

It's ripping you apart.

A sudden flash makes you freeze. The lights are flickering. There's only one thing that makes them do that. The pieces fall into place in your mind.

Blood.

You glance at the agent's fallen bodies strewn across the floor, their squished brains spilling a red substance all over the tile.

Blood.

Demogorgon.

Pause.

Mike, I won't go any further.

That night didn't have a happy ending. Every time you relive it or are even slightly reminded of her, you're thrown into a pit of pain and emptiness that no human being should ever have to endure.

But, for some reason, I'm still going to point this out to you.

Stop reading.

El could've simultaneously broken the necks of all those agents. She could've thrown them against the wall and it still would've killed them. She even could've simply held them in place while you guys escaped.

But she chose the bloodiest possible way to take them out.

El knew what she was doing.

She recognized that no mortal was going to be able to defeat the Demogorgon. She had watched them try and fail over and over and over again. So she decided she was going to have to be the one to kill it.

She summoned that monster on purpose. Blood.

She so desperately wanted to live the life you had offered her. She wanted warm food and a safe house and a loving family. She wanted you.

Lying on a table in that classroom, gripping your hands like they were the only thing keeping her alive, she knew what was coming long before you did. She knew what she had to do. But she didn't know if she would make it out alive or if she would even still be in the same dimension as you afterwards.

So she made you promise.

She made you promise that regardless of what was about to happen, she would get her own bed and get to eat as many Eggos as she wanted to.

She made you promise you could go to the Snow Ball together.

You technically still haven't broken your promise.

10. Conclusion

Never stop fighting. I know it seems like an endless, worthless struggle, but hang in there. Don't stop trying to talk to her, don't stop sneaking out at night to search for her in the woods, don't stop reliving the memories you have of her with your friends (except for those small, special moments you want to keep secret)

And never stop loving her.

Keep her fort up. Keep your Super Comm close by. Keep that little ball of hope alive.

I'll let you in on a secret.

Never stop fighting, because she hasn't either.

El needs you.

Sincerely,

Anonymous

A/N: Thank you so, so much for reading! It means a lot to me that you took the time to read all the way through :) And a special thank you to everyone who reviewed-your reviews were super sweet and every single one of them made me smile!

The counterpart to this fic, Dear Eleven, is out now, so check it out! Love you guys!